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Start Your Own Art Career

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There's a big market for art originals . . . weaving . . . block printed and silk screened textiles . . . ceramics . . . as can be seen by the success stories of artists who have created and marketed their work by themselves. To you art majors who enjoy crafts work, they say

start your own art career

by *Barbara Short*

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Barbara Dreschler pulls the paint across her stenciled design with a squeegee. The design is applied to a silk screen, as can be seen in the lower photograph. One of two screens used for Barbara's two-color design is shown



"**W**E'RE GOING TO find an old house and do it over. We hope there'll be a summer house on the same property where Ed and I can set up my silk screening plant. I'll silk screen textiles, Christmas cards, wrapping paper and maybe wall paper, and I'll market them myself."

This is the pipe dream of Barbara and Edward Dreschler, a young couple who are working and planning so that their dream will come true some day. The Dreschlers live in Ames now, since Edward is doing graduate work in chemistry. His wife, who was graduated from Iowa State in 1944, majored in textiles and clothing and took graduates work in applied art so that she could design textiles.

Although Ed plans to continue with chemistry, his wife reports that he is enthusiastic about her silk screening and helps her make screens and set them up. . . "doing a little bit of engineering" so that his wife can print easily.

"We started printing in a one room apartment. It's really not bad, except that you print on the floor and have things laying all over drying," explains Barbara.

Silk screening as a home industry isn't as fabulous as it sounds, since a good size plant can be equipped for two thousand dollars. Barbara plans to make her screens, which means that the only expense will be paint.

The Dreschler's plans are still in the "maybe" stage, but there's a strong possibility that they'll be a reality. The main thing needed to make such dreams come true, according to Miss Edna O'Bryan, Department of Applied Art, is a persistently strong will to want to see those dreams through to the end. It may mean living and working in one room. It may mean experimenting on a shoestring for a few years, but it's usually worth it. Let's look at the story of a famous textile designer, Vera Neumann, who started her business the same way the Dreschler's hope to begin their's.

Vera began as a free lance artist in New York City. In 1941, she met George Neumann at a party. He and his father had fled from Nazi terrorism in Europe 3 years before. The Neumann family had owned one of the largest indigo printing companies in Hungary,

and when Vera and George were married 2 years later, they silk screened table mats and linens in a one room studio. Vera designed and George printed with handmade screens.

A loft was their next studio, but by that time, Vera was selling her fabric designs to decorating houses. So the couple decided to put out a line of moderate-priced scarves designed by Vera. Their project mushroomed rapidly.

In 1947, they discovered an old Georgian mansion overlooking the Hudson River near Ossining, New York, which now houses Vera's studio, the couple's apartment and their own silk screening factory where 600 yards of fabric or wallpaper can be printed at at one time.

Weaving

If you like to weave, you may be interested in another Iowa State graduate, Edna Crumbaugh. The Crumbaughs live in Brookfield, Illinois, and John's business is site and home planning.

Although Edna's day time is devoted mostly to her two little boys, she does find time to weave in the evenings. Weaving is a business and also a hobby for Edna. She makes no effort to market her things since friends are her best salesman. They enjoy her woven gifts so much that demands for "repeats" seem to snowball. But Edna says, "I don't like to be an automaton, so I rarely duplicate something I've made. I'd much rather create and prefer to weave small articles on my table loom rather than to do large pieces on my floor loom."

Edna Crumbaugh is doing on a small scale what another couple, Jan and Jerry Rubins, term their bread and butter.

The Rubins were graduated from the University of Wisconsin. . . Jan an art major and Jerry as an economics major. During the war, Jan lived near the army camp where Jerry was stationed and began weaving to keep herself busy on lonely week day evenings. Jerry became interested and now does all designing for his wife's weaving.

Up on a mountain looking over the California coast sits the Rubin's home, which Jerry has been building ever since the couple moved to Corte Madera. Jan sells her weaving through leading stores all over the country. The Rubins find that they've made such a reputation for their fabrics that they are having to turn down orders because their working time is limited.

Ceramics

Many of you are familiar with the name Esther Seitmman Warner, an Iowa State graduate who has developed a nationally known pottery business.

Esther began her art career in 4-H craft work. During her college days as an applied art major, she taught crafts in summer camps representing *Successful Farming* magazine. When a sophomore, she left school and became a county home demonstration agent in West Virginia. After she returned to Iowa State and finished school, she went to Africa. Native

designs and colors inspired Esther to begin sculpturing and adapting native art to modern pottery.

Once back in the United States, she and two men set up a pottery shop on the California coast. The three of them developed their designs and clays until now their pottery is sold all over the country.

Another Iowa product, Edith Kiertzner Heath, who lived in the state during her childhood, has built up a successful pottery business with her husband. Brian and Edith Heath manufacture their stoneware with the help of 24 employees. Their dinnerware is sold through shops featuring contemporary home furnishings.

After the Heaths moved to San Francisco in 1941, Edith studied ceramics at the California School of Fine Arts. She began research into clays and glazes in 1943 and set up a laboratory in her home.

By 1946, Edith's business was so successful that the Heaths moved to a larger shop so they could produce dinnerware to be sold on a national scale. Brian left his job to assist in management and to supervise engineering aspects of the work.

Edith designed her dinnerware using stoneware body glazes which she had developed in her two smaller studios. Her glazes, applied manually with a handsprayer, are semi-matt and matt in texture, and have color-tones seen in pebbles and rocks.

Persons with success stories such as these might say to you students who are wondering what to do with your art training, "There's a place for you in the art craft business, if you really want that place. And if you work at it, you'll find more than a place. You'll find opportunities to freely express yourselves artistically, and you'll find success!"

Fibers of nylon, cords, mop yarns, shoe laces, transparent straws and grasses furnish the weaver material for originality

